

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 INR-05 LAB-04

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INFO USCINCSO

C O N F I D E N T I A L LA PAZ 8358

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ELAB, BL

SUBJ: POTENTIAL CONTROLS OVER UNIONS

REF: LA PAZ 7995, 7692 AND PREVIOUS

1. REFTELS REPORTED THAT BOLIVIAN UNIONS HAVE BEEN PLACED IN RECESS PENDING NEW LEGISLATION TO GOVERN THEIR ACTIVITIES.

2. SOURCES IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOR REPORT THE FOLLOWING. PROVISIONS IN THE NEW LABOR CODE UNDER STUDY COULD WORK PROFOUND CHANGES IN THE

STATUS AND ROLE OF BOLIVIAN UNIONS. THE PROVISIONS IN QUESTION DEAL WITH PRIOR TRAINING REQUIREMENTS FOR THE HOLDING OF UNION OFFICE. THE MINISTRY WILL ESTABLISH A SERIES OF TRADE UNION SCHOOLS. CANDIDATES FOR ATTENDANCE AT THESE SCHOOLS WILL BE SELECTED BY THE MINISTRY ON THE BASIS OF "APTITUDE". TO HOLD OFFICE AT THE LOCAL UNION LEVEL A CANDIDATE WILL HAVE TO HAVE GRADUATED FROM A SCHOOL OF BASIC TRADE UNIONISM. TO HOLD OFFICE AT THE FEDERATION OR CONFEDERATION LEVEL A CANDIDATE WILL HAVE TO HAVE GRADUATED FROM A SCHOOL OF ADVANCED TRADE UNIONISM. TRADE UNIONISTS WHO HAVE GRADUATED FROM BOTH LEVELS OF TRAINING WOULD BE ELIGIBLE TO ATTEND THE SCHOOL OF HIGHER MILITARY STUDIES AFTER WHICH THEY WOULD BE ABLE TO STAND FOR OFFICE IN THE BOLIVIAN LABOR CENTRAL.

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3. THE MINISTER OF LABOR AND CERTAIN OF HIS CLOSEST COLLABORATORS REPORTEDLY FAVOR THIS PLAN BECAUSE OF THE CONTROL IT WILL AFFORD THE MINISTRY OVER THE LABOR MOVEMENT AND BECAUSE IT POSTPONES THE REESTABLISHMENT OF THE FULL TRADE UNION STRUCTURE FOR A PERIOD IN EXCESS OF A YEAR.

4. REPORTEDLY, A NUMBER OF ADVISERS ARE COUNSELING THE MINISTER AGAINST THE PLAN ON THE GROUNDS THAT IT WILL ESTABLISH IN LAW A SYSTEM WHICH MAY PROVE UNWORKABLE. THESE ADVISERS BELIEVE THERE IS A GOOD CHANCE THAT TRADE UNIONISTS WILL BOYCOTT THE SCHOOLS AND OSTRACIZE THE "LEADERS" THEY PRODUCE.

5. COMMENT: WHETHER THIS PLAN IS CODIFIED INTO LAW OR NOT, IT IS BECOMING CLEAR THAT THE MINISTRY IS DETERMINED TO DEVISE SOME SYSTEM TO PREVENT UNIONS FROM REGAINING THE LEVELS OF FREEDOM AND EFFECTIVENESS THEY ENJOYED BEFORE NOVEMBER 9. STEDMAN

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